

INTERPROVINCIAL MIGRATION PATTERNS IN ALBERTA

HIGHLIGHTS

- Alberta's net interprovincial migration patterns are variable and responsive to Alberta's economic conditions.
- The largest influx of net interprovincial migrants was in 2006 when more than 46,000 people came to the province.
- Historically, the main provinces of origin for migrants into Alberta were Ontario, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan. These provinces have also been main destinations for those leaving Alberta. In recent years, there has been a net loss of migrants to both British Columbia and Saskatchewan. However, net gains of migrants from Ontario and Quebec have increased significantly.
- Once in the province, the main destinations for interprovincial in-migrants are Calgary and Edmonton. These two major cities received a large number of interprovincial migrants from a variety of cities across Canada including Vancouver, Toronto, and Winnipeg.

CONTEXT

Interprovincial migration indicates the movement of people from one province to another. Alberta has demonstrated fluctuating patterns of net interprovincial migration over the last three decades. Overall, Alberta has had positive net migration. However, there was a large downturn in net interprovincial migration during the much of the 1980's (see Figure 1). As a reflection of the growth in the economy and the need for skilled labour, Alberta has experienced a sustained increase in interprovincial migrants in recent years.

HISTORICAL MIGRATION PATTERNS

Alberta's long-term net interprovincial migration pattern has demonstrated three major peaks in 1981, 1998 and 2006 (see Figure 1). Over the past decade, Alberta has received on average 24,750 net interprovincial migrants. With the boom in the oil sector and a slowing manufacturing sector in central Canada, 69,000 interprovincial migrants came to Alberta in 2008 from Ontario, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan, which represented 69% of the total in-migrants to the province. Alberta had the largest net interprovincial migration gain (approximately 46,000) in 2006¹. While the province still notes increases in net interprovincial migration, the net flow of migrants has slowed recently to 9,900 migrants in 2007 and 20,600 in 2008.

ALBERTA MIGRATION PATTERNS VS. WESTERN PROVINCES

When compared to other Western provinces, historically, British Columbia has also experienced variable net interprovincial migration patterns similar to those of Alberta (see Figure 2). Saskatchewan, however, has had modest net outflows of migrants over the years, with positive net increases in recent years.

Figure 1: Alberta Net Inter-Provincial Migration

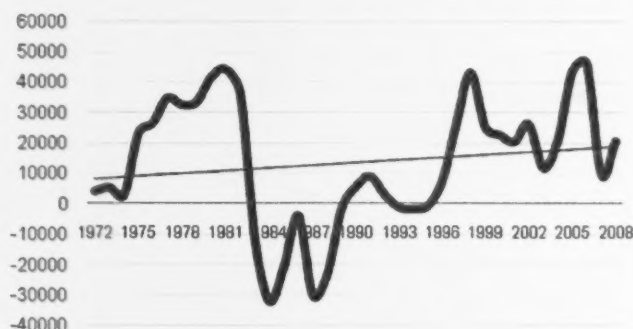
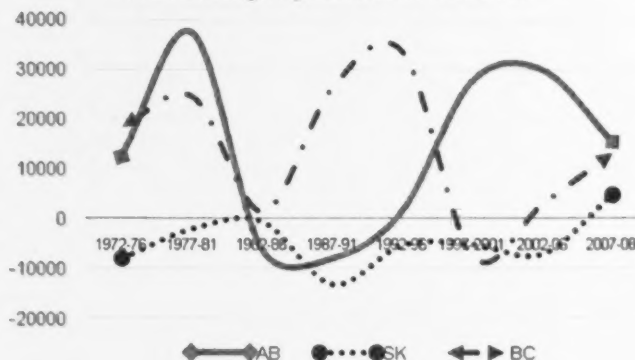


Figure 2: Net Interprovincial Migration at 5-Year Average By Selected Provinces



¹ Quarterly Population Report, First Quarter, 2009. Alberta Finance and Enterprise, Economics & Statistics.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

WHAT PROVINCES DO MIGRANTS COME FROM?

Historically, the majority of interprovincial migrants attracted to Alberta are from Ontario (25%), British Columbia (31%) and Saskatchewan (17%), constituting approximately 73% of total in-migrants (see Figure 3). Similarly, most Albertans leaving the province (i.e., out-migrants) were destined for the same three provinces, Ontario (23%), British Columbia (42%) and Saskatchewan (14%). The outflow of migrants to these three provinces comprised approximately 80% of Alberta's out-migrants (see Figure 4).

With the latest changes to Canada's economy, net outflows to British Columbia (-7,600) and Saskatchewan (-5,200), 54% of total out-migrants, contributed to the slowdown in net interprovincial migration in Alberta; however, net inflows from Ontario (13,800) and Quebec (6,300), 43% of total in-migrants, served to counterbalance this net loss. Figure 5 indicates the decline in net migration from British Columbia and Saskatchewan in recent years as well as increases in net migrants from Ontario and Quebec. Similar patterns of net migration from these provinces were also observed in the 1970's and 1980's.

Figure 3 : In-migration to Alberta

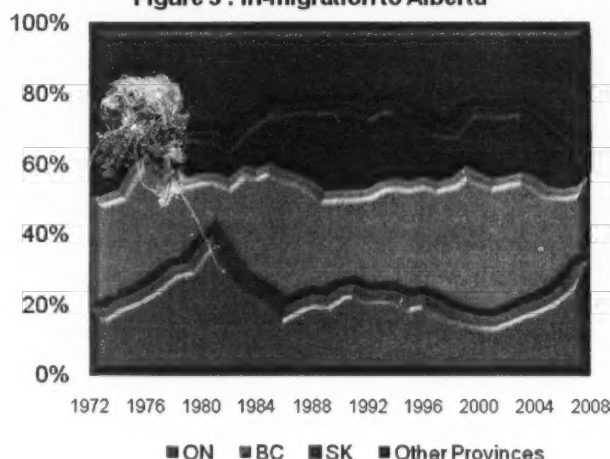


Figure 4 : Out-migration of Alberta

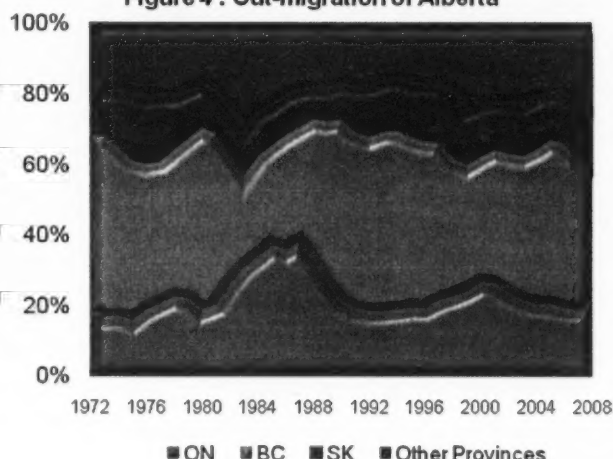
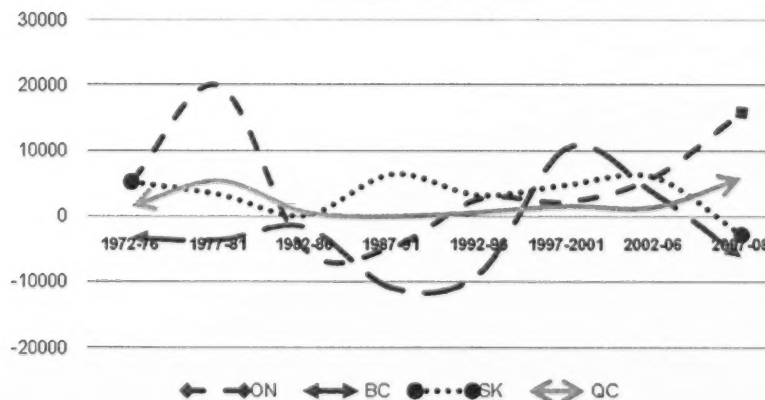


Figure 5: Net Migration in Alberta at 5-Year Average by Major Origins



WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

Population growth in the Calgary and Edmonton CMAs has mainly been driven by interprovincial migration². As shown in Table 1, Calgary and Edmonton CMA constituted the primary destination for more than 55% and 66% in 2001 and 2006, respectively, of net interprovincial migrants to Alberta. Red Deer, Wood Buffalo, and Grande Prairie are major census agglomerations (CA) that also receive a significant portion of interprovincial migrants in Alberta. While it appears that these urban centers received more migrants in 2006 when compared to 2001, the population distribution for each CMA and CA stayed relatively constant in the province from 2001 to 2006. When comparing the total population distribution to the distribution of interprovincial migrants across areas, CAs such as Red Deer, Grand Prairie, and Wood Buffalo received more migrants than their provincial population share.

Table 1: Net Interprovincial Migration by Census Agglomerations

	2001				2006			
	Population	Distribution	Net Migration	Migration Distribution	Population	Distribution	Net Migration	Migration Distribution
Medicine Hat	61,735	2.1%	470	2.4%	68,822	2.1%	350	0.9%
Brooks	21,688	0.7%	570	2.9%	22,452	0.7%	380	0.9%
Lethbridge	87,387	2.9%	420	2.2%	95,196	2.9%	420	1.0%
Calgary (CMA)	951,536	32.0%	5,530	28.4%	1,079,310	32.8%	14,080	34.8%
Red Deer	67,853	2.3%	810	4.2%	82,772	2.5%	1,930	4.8%
Camrose	14,870	0.5%	70	0.4%	15,620	0.5%	140	0.3%
Edmonton (CMA)	937,840	31.5%	5,170	26.5%	1,034,945	31.5%	12,555	31.0%
Lloydminster	23,964	0.8%	65	0.3%	27,023	0.8%	-170	-0.4%
Cold Lake	11,520	0.4%	215	1.1%	11,991	0.4%	160	0.4%
Grande Prairie	58,787	2.0%	780	4.0%	71,868	2.2%	1,800	4.4%
Wood Buffalo	42,581	1.4%	975	5.0%	52,644	1.6%	1,910	4.7%
Wetaskiwin	11,154	0.4%	10	0.1%	11,673	0.4%	70	0.2%
Alberta	2,974,807	77.0%	19,480	77.4%	3,290,350	78.2%	40,510	83.0%

WHAT CITY ARE THEY COMING FROM AND WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

Interprovincial migrants to Alberta come from all major urban centers across the country from St. John's to Vancouver. Table 2 indicates movement patterns of migrants from major CMAs across Canada to the two major CMA destinations in Alberta. To note, Table 2 represents migration patterns as indicated by the 2001 and 2006 Census. Thus, place of origin was as of 1 year prior to the census and the destination as of census date (e.g., origin in 2005, destination in 2006)³.

The majority of in-migrants into Calgary originate from Edmonton, Toronto, and Vancouver. Similarly, the majority of in-migrants into Edmonton come from Calgary, Toronto, and Vancouver. In 2001 and 2006, approximately 18% of in-migrants from Ontario were from Toronto and destined for Calgary, where as between 10% and 14% of in-migrants from Toronto were destined for Edmonton. Similar migration patterns hold for Vancouver, the largest source of in-migrants from British Columbia. There is also a large proportion of in-migrants coming from non-CMAs into both Calgary and Edmonton. Approximately half of interprovincial migrants destined for Calgary and Edmonton in 2001 and 2006 were not from census metropolitan areas, indicating many of those coming to Alberta are from rural or smaller urban centers. Also, approximately 10% of migrants from Edmonton moved to Calgary and vice versa in both census years.

² Statistics Canada (2008). Report on the demographic situation in Canada. Catalogue no. 91-209-X

³ All information in Figures and Tables are sourced from Statistics Canada.

While the source provinces and CMAs of interprovincial migrants to Alberta are changing, overall Alberta continues to be a net beneficiary of interprovincial migrants.

Table 2: Origin and Destination from Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) to other CMAs in Alberta

Origin			Destination				
			2001		2006		
Total in-migrants to Alberta			Calgary	Edmonton	Calgary	Edmonton	
British Columbia	24,859	24,379	Vancouver	3,370	2,535	3,545	2,160
			Victoria	860	405	785	760
			Other CMAs	485	210	825	660
Alberta	-	-	Calgary	0	3,760	0	3,675
			Edmonton	4,030	0	4,730	0
Saskatchewan	12,480	13,231	Regina	1,175	575	1,055	550
			Saskatoon	1,370	755	975	745
Manitoba	5,100	7,162	Winnipeg	1,785	1,000	1,945	1,225
Ontario	10,358	23,562	Ottawa - Gatineau	550	560	1,060	870
			Toronto	1,915	1,030	4,295	3,230
			Other CMAs	1,435	920	3,280	2,150
Quebec	2,190	5,354	Montréal	580	425	1,380	785
			Québec	105	130	165	190
			Other CMAs	0	10	110	50
Nova Scotia	2,745	5,472	Halifax	455	340	860	670
New Brunswick	1,583	3,916	Moncton	-	-	250	120
			Saint John	145	165	215	200
Newfoundland & Labrador	2,836	5,985	St. John's	250	335	435	465
Non-CMA			19,090	21,645	18,730	23,820	
Total			37,600	34,800	44,640	42,325	